

WISCONSIN WORKS (W-2) CONTRACT AND IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE

201 E. Washington Avenue, GEF 2, Room 511
Madison, WI 53707

Wednesday, April 19, 2000

10:00 AM - 2:00 PM

MINUTES

The W-2 Contract and Implementation Committee is the single point of contact for feedback to the Department of Workforce Development on policy implementation related to W-2 agencies, and includes representation from the Wisconsin County Human Service Association (WCHSA), Urban Caucus counties, W-2 private agencies in Milwaukee County and the balance of state, and Tribal W-2 agencies.

Committee: Members (Present = X)

X Jennifer Noyes DES/AO
William B. Adams Racine County
Jon Angeli Southwest Consortium
X Phyllis A. Bermingham Marathon County
William Clay OIC
X Mary Ann Cook Dane County
X Tina Koehn UMOS
X Kim Mooney Fond du Lac County
James Nitz Kaiser Group
X Laverne Plucinski Bad River Chippewa
X Shirley Ross La Crosse County
Jerry Stepaniak MAXIMUS
Julia Taylor YW Works
X Michael Van Dyke Door County
X Glynis Underwood ESI
Judith A. Weseman Kenosha County

Alternates (Present = X)

Jan Alft Marathon County
X Linda Brandenburg ESI
X Cheryl Cobb UMOS
X Rosa Dominquez OIC
Mona Garland OIC
X Deb Hughes Southwest Consortium
X Edward Kamin III Kenosha County
Richard L. Kammerud Polk County
X James Krivsky Racine County
Barbara Metoxen Oneida Nation
Tom Miller La Crosse County
X Teresa Pierce Western WI PIC
X Rita Renner YW Works
Sara Shackleton Dane County
Chris Schmitz Fond du Lac County

State Staff

Attendees:

Tim Hinline, BWSP
Kevin Huggins, BFS
Margaret McMahon, BWSP
Jude Morse, BDS
Cori McFarlane, BFS
Shawn Smith, BDS
Art Zoellner, DWD/ASD
Richard Hamilton, DES/BWSP/ORS

Jane (Jilk) Kahl, BWSP
Germaine Mayhew, BFS Training Section
Howard Bernstein, DWD/OLC
Jan Van Vleck, DES/Acting Deputy Administrator
Kim Markham, DWD/Legislative Liaison
Joseph Stafford, BFS
Dianne Reynolds, BWSP/WPS

Guests:

Paula Lampley, MAXIMUS
Kaye Krenzke, Employment Solutions
Sharon K. McCormick, Sheboygan Co.

Tim Cowan, YW Works
Marilyn Putz, Walworth Co., Kaiser Group
Gary Rudzinec, Waukesha Co., Curtis & Asso.

Recorder:

Stephen Dow, W-2 Contract and Implementation Committee Coordinator

Welcome

Jennifer Noyes introduced herself as the new DES Administrator, requesting members to continue their active participation in this Committee and not be afraid to provide comments and feedback.

Minutes Approval

Deb Hughes requested the following be removed from the draft of the March minutes and moved to the April minutes. The information relates to access to training programs.

Subsequent to the 03/24/00 meeting, Tony Veeder provided this information: "At this meeting, Deb Hughes brought up the issue of training slots and the perception in Grant County that if larger counties signed up for the majority of the seats, small counties such as Grant would not be able to get training. I asked Deb about the course that she was referring to and she said she would get back to me. Early this week, I was contacted by CeCe Fishnick from Grant County and she explained that the courses at issue was Child Care New Policy and Refresher Training with two offerings in Madison in April-May (also being conducted statewide in all other regions). She said that she had received information that Dane and Rock Counties had signed up for 15 of the 20 seats in both courses and that the 5 from Grant County would not get into either class. I researched this further with the Registrar and the Project Lead, Paula Hintze, and the reality of this issue is that there are 40 seats in each offering, not 20; and all of the 5 names from Grant County were on the sign-up list for the May 11 offering, but information letters have not been sent yet. I called CeCe and told her the information and that all of the Grant Co. employees were in the course requested. I also asked her to inform Deb Hughes."

Rita Renner clarified that, at the end of the discussion about entered employment performance standards (under "Other" on the agenda), Paul Saeman said he would return at the next meeting to further discuss this issue and provide answers to questions raised during the meeting.

A motion was made by James Krivsky to approve the March, 2000, minutes, with these two modifications; the motion was seconded by Phyllis Bermingham. Motion carried.

Issue/Discussion: Best Practices Discussion

1. Medical Assistance Purchase Plan (MAPP): No one identified any issues with implementation.
2. Dealing with Learning Disabilities:

Members shared experiences with various tactics. In Wausau there is an attempt to identify learning disabilities at initial assessment, including the use of sheltered workshop evaluation when the participant has been in special education classes in past. The workshop provides an assessment on appropriate employment resources.

Door County relies on self-identification and the vocational rehabilitation counselor on their case management team.

Fear of the classroom, multiple problems (AODA, most often), and the difficulties of identification/assessment have been common factors agencies have to overcome in working with those with learning disabilities. Some participants are able to complete employment applications so that their limitations aren't identified until problems appear on the job. These participants pose another problem in that they are frequently the participant who is sanctioned, causing problems for the agency in meeting performance standards.

Many of these cases show progress only in small steps, so patience seems demanded. Resources for any specific case seem complicated by whether the person was "socially promoted" in the school system.

Geri Mayhew reported that there has been disappointing attendance at the training programs related to working with the learning disabled.

Deb Hughes reported they use their well-baby checks as a way of assessing overall family functioning, which may also indicate learning difficulties. Members also felt a variety of community services, including literacy councils, English as a second language programs and child protective services, need to be involved. Some employers now provide supportive services for the learning disabled, probably due to the tight employment market.

The discussion turned to working with non-English speaking participants, including the use of WAA funds to train employers in Spanish. Tina Koehn volunteered herself and UMOS as resource for Spanish language resources as well as INS employment issues. Members asked that Tina provide, at the next meeting, a brief overview of employment rules for non-citizens.

Issue/Discussion: CARES Management

Art Zoellner described the changes in DWD management of CARES.

The Biennial Budget (1999 Wis Act 9) would have moved CARES management entirely to the Department of Health & Family Services (DHFS). The Governor vetoed that, but transferred CARES management from DES to the Administrative Services Division (ASD) with oversight by the Department of Administration (DOA). These actions should be transparent to local staff. The basis for all of this was contention problems in CARES. J. Krivsky asked for an example; A. Zoellner said the ED/BC subsystem was the easiest to identify as all the programs run through that set of programs, so each program wants work done on it, meaning there is a "contention" for staff resources and testing problems.

A. Zoellner described the new structure being developed to manage CARES.

Issue/Discussion: CARES Confidentiality

As part of the previous discussion, Howard Bernstein referred to BWSP Operations Memo 00-25 and data sharing agreements. The material in the Operations Memo and the attached self-study guide on case comments generally come down to a matter of awareness on the part of the worker. Ed Kamin referred to the policy that "if it isn't in CARES, it doesn't exist". Bernstein said there was no intent to change that position.

Jan Van Vleck remarked about the difference between recording a diagnosis and recording data (that a diagnosis exists and its location in the record).

Mary Ann Cook questioned the adequacy of the revised confidentiality form. As many of the members had not seen 00-25 yet (it was just being distributed at the time of the meeting and was not an agenda item, so no copies were available), it was proposed as an agenda item for the next meeting.

Issue/Discussion: Monthly W-2 Time Limits Update

Margaret McMahon reviewed BWSP Operations Memos 00-27 (Interim Extensions) & 00-28 (Extension Policy Reminder) and the draft of one on CMC (this memo has been printed and distributed since the meeting as 00-34).

H. Bernstein reviewed the status of 4 cases at circuit court the next week. There have been no new cases added. State's position is that these cases should not be in court.

P. Bermingham asked about the extension statistics; with 133 cases of the total 253 "Determined Not Eligible for Extension by Local W-2 Agency", have we any research on "why" and "what to do". McMahon responded that at one time approximately 70% of the non-eligibles were for non-participation by the W-2 participant. At the next meeting, Margaret will provide more detailed information on this population of participants.

Next meeting's agenda will also include statistics about subsequent extensions.

Issue/Discussion: Customer Satisfaction Survey

Jan Van Vleck and Kevin Huggins provided a brief history and background. Secretary Stewart was concerned with the perceptions attached to "light touch" and the actual offer and delivery of services.

M A Cook: this version (#3) of the survey along with the "one pager" required by 1999 Wis Act 9 suggest a lack of trust in the W-2 agencies and their staff. Version #3 "comes off" as a monitoring tool more than a customer survey; the survey shouldn't overlook the dynamics of the people coming to the W-2 agency (they frequently come in crisis and don't understand it as a request for W-2; customers frequently are in information overload and too overwhelmed to provide accurate responses to a survey).

Teresa Pierce: some cases approach the agency as self-targeted to specific programs (e.g., BadgerCare) and have no interest in information about other programs.

Ed Kamin: the survey does little to help agency identify the real areas needing improvement.

Several members asked to whom the survey is directed and suggested the same survey be given to different groups so weight of results can be measured and efforts targeted. Suggestions were also to:

- add a question about what prompted the person to come to the agency?
- did agency provide what the person came to the agency for?
- was other appropriate information given by the agency?
- was the person treated fairly and with respect?

Kevin Huggins: the workgroup discussed having a question on the survey about why the person came to the agency. But workgroup members felt that if the person wanted cash benefits and was placed in W-2, the response of the person would be negative even when the agency acted properly.

Rita Renner was concerned that the survey covered only W-2.

Jennifer Noyes: the survey does not appear ready for use yet and will be sent back to the workgroup for further refinement. She also requested that someone from the committee be added to the workgroup; Ed Kamin volunteered.

Issue/Discussion: Community Youth Grants (CYG)

Jane Kahl: there are 28 that have passed review so far with 27 of those nearly complete and the 28th still to provide some additional information. In response to Phyllis Bermingham's question, Jane explained that scoring was done by 4 review groups of 4 members each. DWD also looked for a statewide impact, attempting to distribute the funds geographically.

Cheryl Cobb inquired about the services to be provided; Kahl directed members to the CYG web site for a summary of the services.

Gary Rudzinec asked if there was money available for other youth-targeted activities. Kahl directed him to the "TANF Youth Grants" (more information at www.dwd.state.wi.us/cew, about the RFP for "Work-Based Learning Programs").

Issue/Discussion: Legislative Update

Kim Markham: there will be an Assembly session in May but with limited floor opportunity for reconciliation it is not likely any of the W-2 issues will be worked on. Kim provided a handout describing legislation and its status.

Michael Van Dyke asked if there was a projection of what legislative issues would come up in the near future. Markham responded that DWD was identifying 6-8 issues for the next regular session; education would more than likely be an issue and that time limits may be; Food Stamp issues may also result from the LAB audit; and MA issues certainly will be there, but what they will be are as yet unknown.

Issue/Discussion: Training Update

Geri Mayhew and her staff provided an update on the re-engineered new worker training. Geri thanked the members and all their staff who assisted; the members expressed appreciation to the training section's work and felt this product was a great improvement.

Issue/Discussion: CARES Update

Tim Hineline reviewed BWSP Operations Memo 00-33 about CARES alerts and notices. Work is progressing on CARES notice redesign and related issues. Next month's agenda will include an update on those efforts.

Issue/Discussion: Agenda Planning

Jennifer Noyes asked members if they felt it was time for the committee to re-evaluate its mission and expectations.

Rosa Dominguez mentioned that, as an advisory committee, she anticipated a more active role by the committee but found that not to be the case. She mentioned performance standards as an example.

M A Cook: DES should identify hot issues early enough to permit an active participation, not reactive by the committee. Noyes agreed and suggested the committee should have a role in the production of policy/process issue documents and should initiate discussions on those issues; otherwise, the committee will always be a more reactive agent, than proactive.

M A Cook suggested one problem in actively discussing issues was the limitations on discussions during the RFP cycle. Phyllis Bermingham asked if the W-2 procurement process used to date is the only process open to DWD; this would be the time to investigate other options, before the next RFP cycle begins. Edward Kamin agreed, saying there is a real discrepancy between the RFPs and today's reality. Tina Koehn suggested forming subcommittee to work on procurement options. Shirley Ross: members did have input on performance standards, but many times it has been difficult to determine the impact of that input and whether it made a difference.

M A Cook suggested adding some standard agenda items of special interest to members and having reports from subcommittees about those topics. J. Noyes agreed, saying this would provide a better and more timely input from the committee.

The committee felt an issue of immediate importance to all members was performance standards, so the Performance Standards Subcommittee was formed with these volunteers:

Rosa Dominguez, Co-chair	Mary Ann Cook
Rita Renner, Co-chair	Phyllis Bermingham
Glynis Underwood	Paula Lampley

Paul Saeman, DES, will provide staff to this group as requested, with assistance by Lynn Schmitt.

An initial report will be given by the subcommittee at the May meeting. An initial concern members wanted the Subcommittee to consider was performance standards and equity issues; the initial product is to be a list of issues by priority. P. Bermingham mentioned that an underlying issue in the performance standards discussions includes what "welfare reform" really means.

A second subcommittee was formed to work on Clock, Extensions, and the Hard-to-Serve. Members are:

Michael Van Dyke	Mary Ann Cook
Phyllis Bermingham	Linda Brandenburg
DES will provide a staff person.	

Consideration will be given to forming a third subcommittee about funding issues.

Issue/Discussion: OTHER –

Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) Review

Richard Hamilton from the BWSP Office of Refugee Services (ORS) gave an update of the federal ORR review. The tentative date is the week of May 22. ORR will review DWD and DHFS programs as a follow-up to the December, 1999, allegations of service issues to non-citizens. Visits will be made to 4-7 communities. Hoa Luu of ORS will coordinate visits to local mutual assistance groups. Areas likely to be visited are Dane, Milwaukee, La Crosse or Eau Claire, Marathon, and possibly Wood or Winnebago. Expectations are that 5 clients from each agency (total of 5 in all of Milwaukee) would be interviewed. It was unknown if these would be current or former clients, but we will have some input into which clients are interviewed.

Members asked what the federal civil rights compliance standards are.

Joe Stafford said he anticipated each of the Milwaukee W-2 agencies would be visited.

Revised Code of Federal Regulations for Refugee Cash Assistance (RCA) and Refugee Medical Assistance (RMA)

A notice of proposed rule making (NPR) was published in the Federal Register 03/22/2000. The changes require a state to make decisions about its administration of these programs by 09/20/2000. Some of the changes required different public/private partnerships (primarily voluntary agencies). Other changes align the programs with TANF, but not with respect to the employment rules. Implementation of the changes are required within 2 years from 03/22/2000.

